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BLACK PANTHER



HUDLIN EATON HENNESSY WHITE

DIRECT EDITION

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RATED T+

BLACK PANTHER



PREVIOUSLY

There are some places you just don't mess with. Wakanda is one of them. Since the dawn of time, that African warrior nation has been sending would-be conquerors home in body bags. While the rest of Africa got carved up like a Christmas turkey by the rest of the world, Wakanda's cultural evolution has gone unchecked for centuries, unfettered by the yoke of colonization. The result: a high-tech, resource-rich, ecologically-sound paradise that makes the rest of the world seem primitive by comparison.

Ruling over all of this is the Black Panther.

The Black Panther is more than just the embodiment of a warrior cult that's served as Wakanda's religious, political and military head since its inception. The Black Panther is the embodiment of the ideals of a people. Anyone who'd dare to make a move on Wakanda must go through him.

Despite conflict amongst his allies in America, the Black Panther was able to enjoy his marriage to Storm of the X-Men. Yet, as soon as the celebration concluded, T'Challa and his queen were thrust into the new reality of their world—one where Wakanda is in the precarious position of navigating a political minefield. And to further complicate matters, the couple was approached with a startling proposition: an alliance with their adversary, Dr. Doom!

BLACK PANTHER (ISSN #1540-0255) No. 18, October, 2006. Published Monthly except bi-monthly in December by MARVEL PUBLISHING, INC., a subsidiary of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 417 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016. **ADDITIONAL MAIL PERIODICAL POSTAGE RATES IS PERMITTED AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES.** © 2006 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, fictitious institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. \$2.99 per copy in the U.S. and \$3.75 in Canada (GST #R127032852) in the direct market and \$2.99 per copy in the U.S. and \$4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) through the newsstand. Canadian Agreement #40668537. Printed in the USA. Subscription rate (U.S. dollars) for 12 issues: U.S. \$27.00; Canada \$37.00; Foreign \$39.00. POSTMASTER: SEND ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO BLACK PANTHER, C/O MARVEL SUBSCRIPTION DEPT., P.O. BOX 30520 SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84130-0520. TELEPHONE # (800) 217-9156. FAX # (801) 208-0677. subscriptions@marvel.com. ALAN FINE, President & CEO Of Marvel Toys and Marvel Publishing, Inc.; DAVID BOGART, VP Of Publishing Operations; DAN CARR, Executive Director of Publishing Technology; JUSTIN F. GABRIE, Managing Editor; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Joe Mamone, Advertising Director, at [jammone@marvel.com](mailto:jmamone@marvel.com) or 212-516-8534. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9156.



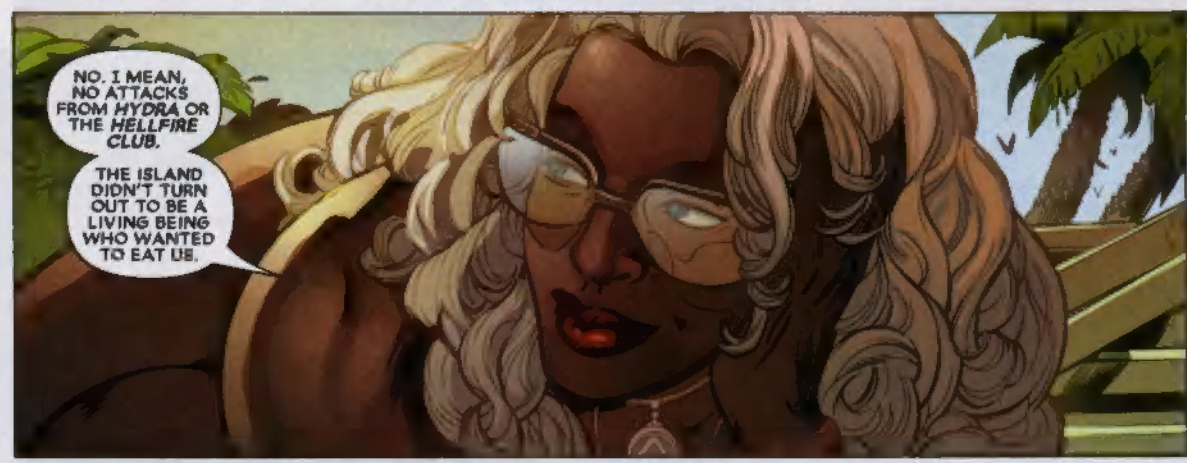
THANK YOU.



FOR WHAT?

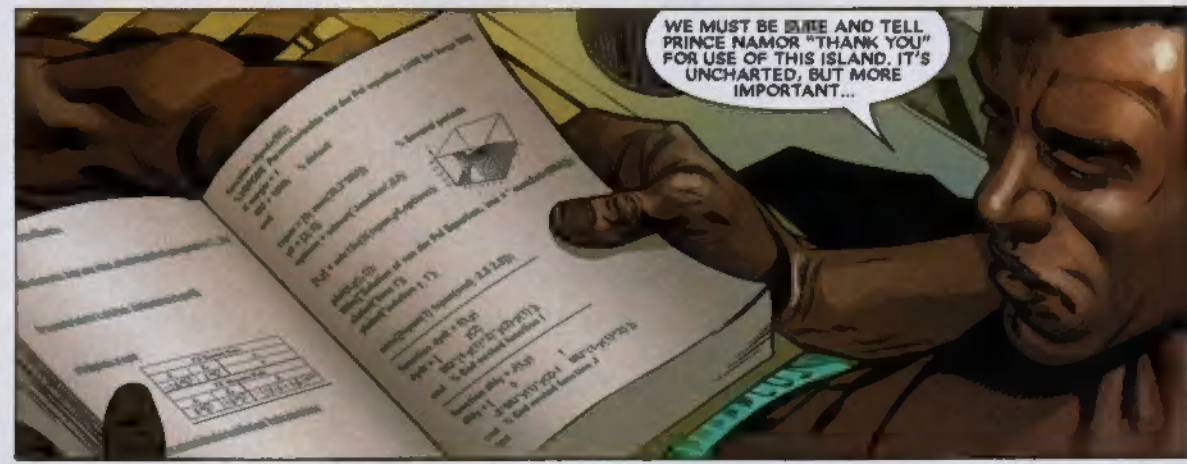
FOR SUCH AN AMAZING HONEYMOON. TWO WEEKS AND NO FIGHTS.

THAT WOULD BE TERRIBLE IF WE FOUGHT ON OUR HONEYMOON!



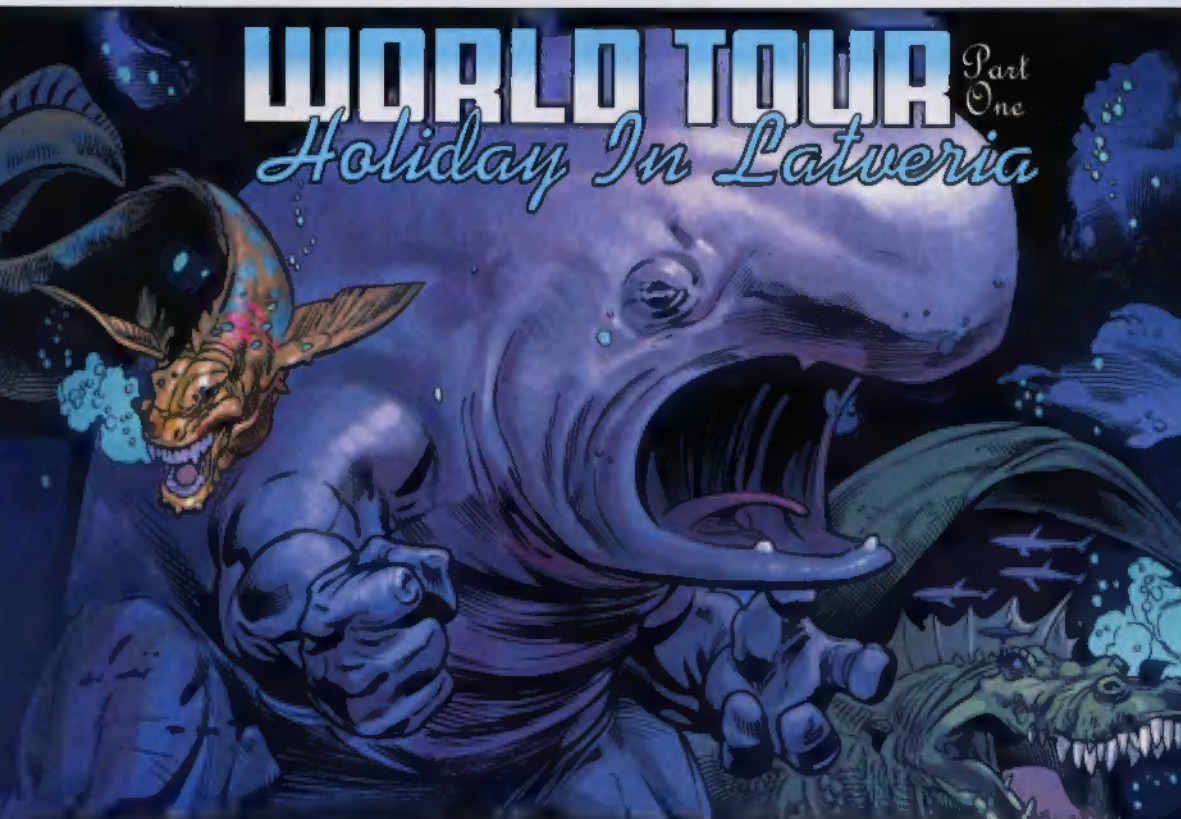
NO. I MEAN, NO ATTACKS FROM HYDRA OR THE HELLFIRE CLUB.

THE ISLAND DIDN'T TURN OUT TO BE A LIVING BEING WHO WANTED TO EAT US.



WE MUST BE ~~QUICK~~ AND TELL PRINCE NAMOR "THANK YOU" FOR USE OF THIS ISLAND. IT'S UNCHARTED, BUT MORE IMPORTANT...

"...HE'S GOT THE
MOST DANGEROUS
SEA CREATURES ON
EARTH PATROLLING
THE WATERS AROUND
THE ISLAND FOR MILES."



WORLD TOUR *Part One*

Holiday In Latveria

REGINALD
HUDLIN
WRITER

SCOT
EATON
PENCILER

ANDREW
HENNESSY
INKER

DEAN
WHITE
COLORIST

VC'S RANDY
GENTILE
LETTERER

DANIEL
KETCHUM
ASST. EDITOR

AXEL
ALONSO
EDITOR

JOE
QUESADA
CHIEF

DAN
BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ARE WE GOING TO SEE HIM SOON?
IS THERE A REGULAR MEETING OF
SUPER-POWERED MONARCHS THAT
WE'LL BE ATTENDING?

WELL, NOT A
"REGULAR MEETING,"
NO. BUT I THOUGHT IT
WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA
FOR US TO VISIT SOME
OF THE LARGER CENTERS
OF GLOBAL POWER.

SO NOW THE JOB BEGINS.
DOOM'S MESSAGE TO US
REALLY AFFECTED YOU
THAT MUCH?

HE JUST
ARTICULATED
A FEELING THAT
IS OBVIOUS TO
ANYONE PAYING
ATTENTION.

BEHIND THE SMILES AND THE GIFTS
LURKS FEAR. PEOPLE LOOK AT US AS
A COUPLE AND QUIVER.

TOO MUCH
POWER, TOO MUCH
WEALTH, TOO MUCH
CONNECTED. THEY
THINK WE MIGHT TAKE
OVER THE WORLD.

SO YOU
WANT TO DO A
GOODWILL TOUR TO
ASSUAGE THEIR
FEARS.

EXACTLY.

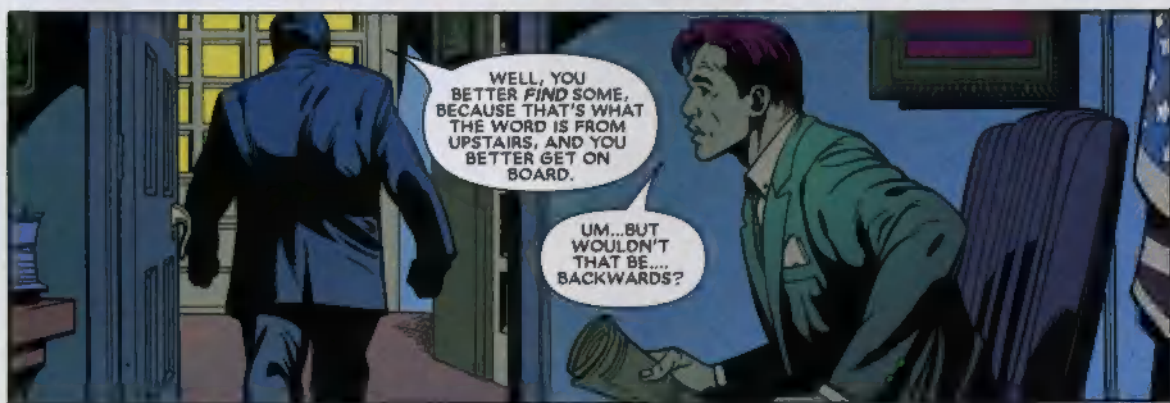
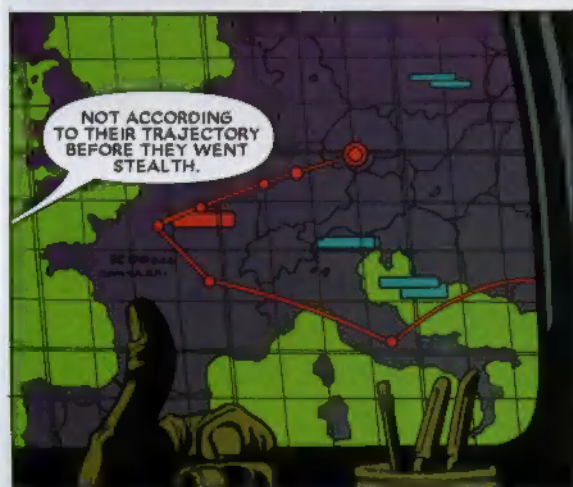
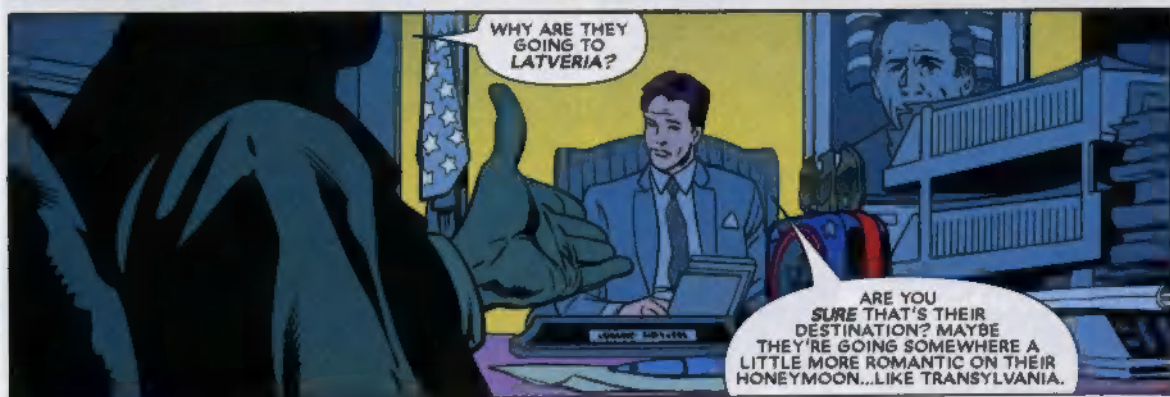
AND IF WE CAN'T
ASSUAGE THEIR
FEARS...?

THAT WOULD BE
UNFORTUNATE.

WHY?

BECAUSE THEN
WE'D HAVE TO
TAKE OVER THE
WORLD.

HA! HA! HA!



SOMEWHERE OVER
THE ATLANTIC...

ARE YOU SURE
YOU WANT TO
DO THIS? NOT
THE NICEST WAY
TO END YOUR
HONEYMOON.



I HATE UNFINISHED BUSINESS,
W'KABI. THE MAN THREW DOWN
A GAUNTLET DISGUISED AS
AN INVITATION.

WHY TAKE
THE BAIT? AND
WHY DO IT ON
HIS TURF?

TO
MAKE A
POINT.



I WOULD HAVE
HOPED MARRIAGE
WOULD MATURE
YOU.



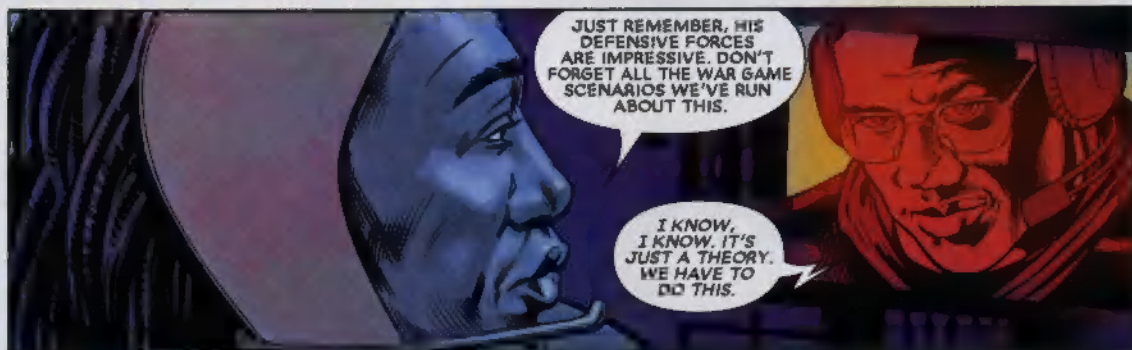
DR. DOOM IS A PSYCHOPATH
FRESH OUT OF HELL. IF
HE ISN'T CONTAINED
IMMEDIATELY, HE COULD
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE
CHAOS IN THE SUPER-
HUMAN COMMUNITY
TO--

I GET IT,
I GET IT.



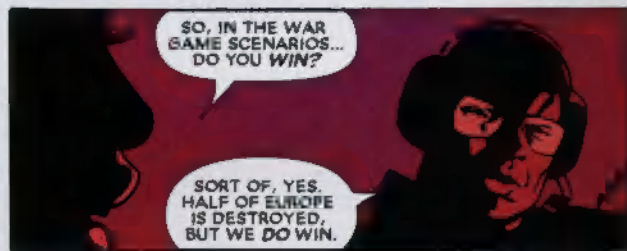
JUST REMEMBER, HIS
DEFENSIVE FORCES
ARE IMPRESSIVE. DON'T
FORGET ALL THE WAR GAME
SCENARIOS WE'VE RUN
ABOUT THIS.

I KNOW,
I KNOW. IT'S
JUST A THEORY.
WE HAVE TO
DO THIS.

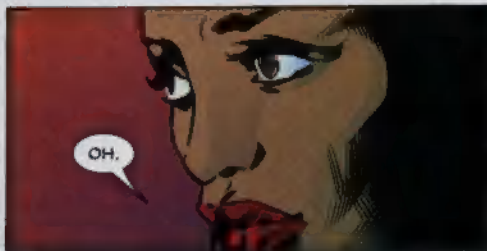


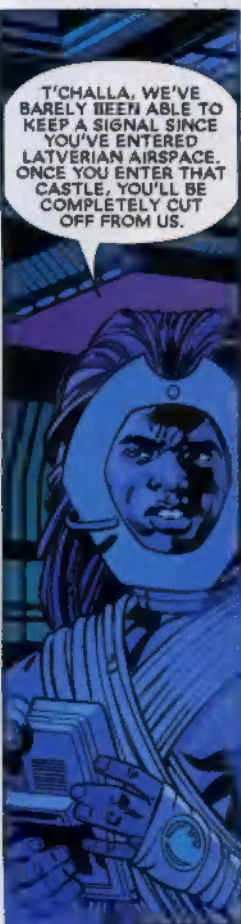
SO, IN THE WAR
GAME SCENARIOS...
DO YOU WIN?

SORT OF, YES.
HALF OF EUROPE
IS DESTROYED,
BUT WE DO WIN.



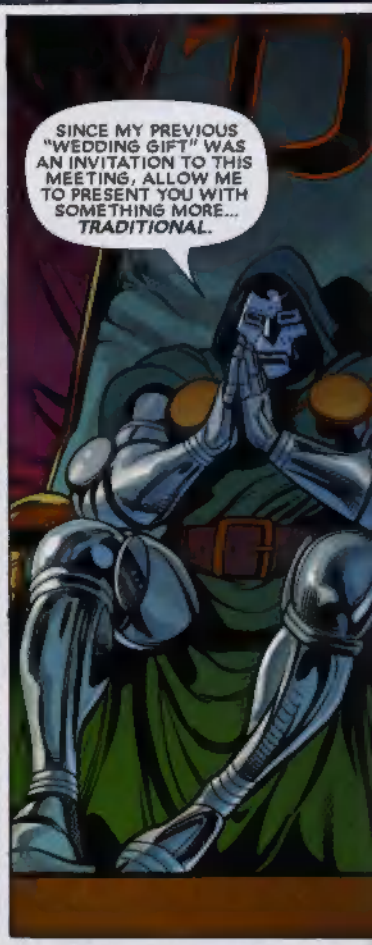
OH.







WELCOME!



SINCE MY PREVIOUS "WEDDING GIFT" WAS AN INVITATION TO THIS MEETING, ALLOW ME TO PRESENT YOU WITH SOMETHING MORE... TRADITIONAL.



GO AHEAD-- OPEN IT.

IT DOESN'T CONTAIN ANY UNPLEASANT SURPRISES.



YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE, DOOM.

I MEAN REALLY... YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.



NICE. LALIQUE?

CORRECT. I THOUGHT SOMETHING TRANSPARENT, FROM A RETAIL CONCERN, MIGHT PERSUADE YOU TO ACTUALLY TAKE IT HOME.



THE GLASSWORK IS BEAUTIFUL, BUT SO FRAGILE...

...LIKE THE WORLD ITSELF.

AND WHAT
KEEPS THE
WORLD FROM
SHATTERING?

TRUST. A SHARED
UNDERSTANDING
OF WHO OUR
FRIENDS ARE.

TRUST IS A
RARE COMMODITY
THESE DAYS.

YOU TWO ARE VERY LUCKY. YOU'VE
FOUND SOMEONE YOU CAN TRUST.
YOU'VE FORGED AN ALLIANCE
THAT WILL BENEFIT BOTH OF
YOU FOR THE DURATION OF
YOUR LIVES.

BUT WHO
ELSE CAN YOU
TRUST?

DO YOU TRUST THE UNITED
STATES GOVERNMENT?
S.H.I.E.L.D.? TONY
STARK?

OF COURSE YOU
DON'T. THAT'S WHY YOU
JOINED THE AVENGERS IN
THE FIRST PLACE, T'CHALLA. TO
SPY ON THEM. TO MAKE SURE
THEIR INTENTIONS WERE
HONORABLE.

AND NOW, YOUR FORMER COLLEAGUES--
DESPITE ALL YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH
TOGETHER--ARE TAKING ACTIONS THAT
CONFIRM EVERY WORST-CASE
SCENARIO YOU'VE EVER IMAGINED.

YOU'RE A STRATEGIST,
T'CHALLA. YOU SEE WHERE THIS IS
HEADED...EVEN IF THEY DON'T. EVEN
AS THEIR GOOD INTENTIONS LEAD THEM
STRAIGHT TO HELL--A PLACE I'D
STRONGLY RECOMMEND AVOIDING.

AM I SUPPOSED TO TRUST YOU,
VICTOR? A MAN WHO HIDES BEHIND
PUPPETS INSTEAD OF MEETING ME
FACE-TO-FACE?

WHAT ARE
YOU TALKING
ABOUT--?

STOP PLAYING
GAMES. OR WE'RE
LEAVING.

I AM
DOOM!

GOODBYE.



BRAVO!

HOW DID YOU KNOW? IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN A LACK OF HEAT SIGNATURE. I BUILT IT INTO THE NEW MODELS TO FOOL THE BEST INFRARED SENSORS--



NO SWEAT. NO HUMAN MUSK.

AH! TYPICAL OF ME! TOO PERFECT!

THAT'S ONE WAY OF PUTTING IT.



I'VE ALWAYS SAID THE AFRICAN IS A SUPERIOR PHYSICAL SPECIMEN.

FINISH THE SENTENCE, DOOM. "...WHICH COMPENSATES FOR HIS LACK OF INTELLECT."

GENERALLY TRUE, YES, BUT CLEARLY THE WAKANDAN IS EXCEPTIONAL!

PERHAPS A LOW-GRADE MUTANT STRAIN IN YOUR PEOPLES' DNA.



OR PERHAPS BECAUSE WE HAD THE MILITARY MIGHT TO MAINTAIN OUR CULTURAL INTEGRITY, AND OUR TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY OVER EUROPEANS SUCH AS YOURSELF.

WHEN YOU WERE IN CAVES, WE WERE CHARTING THE STARS.



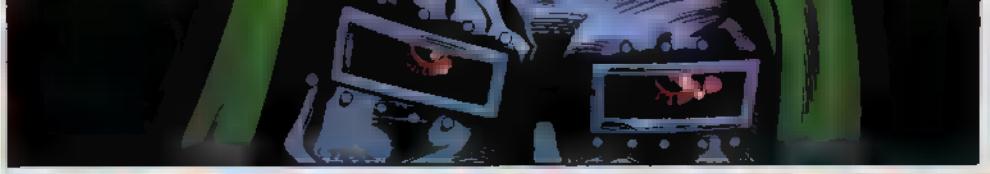
TOUCHY SUBJECT, PANTHER...?

PERHAPS TOO MUCH TIME PLAYING "TONTTO" TO CAPTAIN AMERICA...?



I AM PROUD TO CALL CAPTAIN AMERICA MY ALLY AND MY FRIEND.

DO YOU HAVE ANYONE YOU CAN CALL THE SAME?



IN THE
INTERESTS ■■■
BIGGER GOALS,
I WILL IGNORE
YOUR INSOLENT
TONE.

CONSIDER
THE
PICTURE:

YOUR FORMER
COLLEAGUES IN
UNITED STATES? RIPPED
APART ■■■ A CIVIL
THAT HAS PITTED
■■■ AGAINST ONE
ANOTHER, RACING
■■■ UNCERTAIN
SPOILS.

THE HULK?
VANISHED TO
WHEREABOUTS

■■■ HELP US IF--
OR, SHOULD ■
SAY, WHEN--
■■■ RETURNS.

■■■ IS EVER
AND UNDERSTANDABLY
■■■ ABOUT THE
RAMIFICATIONS OF
■■■ CLIMATE, INDEED,
MY INTEL INDICATES THAT
HE'S TAKEN A MORE "PRO-
ACTIVE" STANCE AGAINST
THE SURFACE WORLD.

THE INHUMANS?
■■■ TO THE
BLUE AREA ■■■ THE MOON
WHILE DECLARING ■ COLD
WAR WITH THE U.S AND,
INDEED, HUMANITY
ITSELF.

THIS IS THE
WORLD TODAY.
THE ■■■ THAT
■■■ WAKANDA.
A WORLD THAT
■■■ TO CONSIDER A
SIMPLE ADAGE:

"POLITICS
MAKES
BEDFELLOWS."



■ PROVOCATIVE
ANALYSIS ■ WORLD
EVENTS, DOOM, BUT
I ■■■■■ ACCEPT YOUR
OFFER. I CANNOT FORM
■■■■■ ALLIANCE WITH
■■■■■ I DON'T
TRUST.

YOU WOULD
SHUN ME! AFTER
I EXTEND
■■■■■ HAND IN

IF THE CIVIL WAR IN
AMERICA ERUPTS BEYOND
ITS BORDERS, I WILL
FIGHT ■■■■ THE ■■■■■
THAT I SHARE WITH
MY COMRADES, NOT
■■■■■ OF LOSING ■■■■

WHATEVER COMES OF
THIS WAR, IT ■■■ MY
RESPONSIBILITY TO
UPHOLD THE VALUES
THAT WAKANDA
WAS BUILT
UPON.

AND ■■■■
THEY TAKE
WAKANDA
FROM YOU?

VIOLATING
OUR ■■■■
WOULD MEAN
WE'VE ALREADY
LOST.

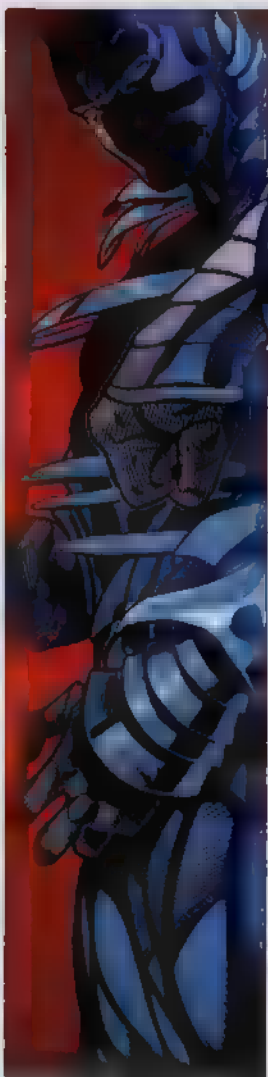
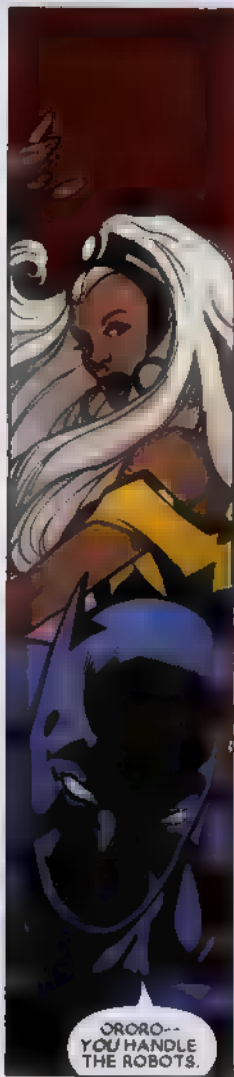
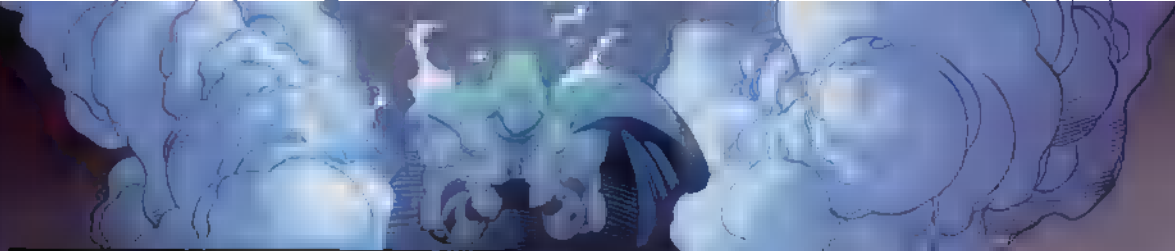
YOU
JUST DON'T
HAVE ■■■■
TO LOSE.

PUT YOUR WOMAN IN ■■■■
PLACE, T'CHALLA. ■■■■ HATE
TO HAVE TO ■■■■ IT
FOR YOU.

YOU SHOULD
■■■■■ CAREFUL HOW
YOU SPEAK TO
MY ■■■■

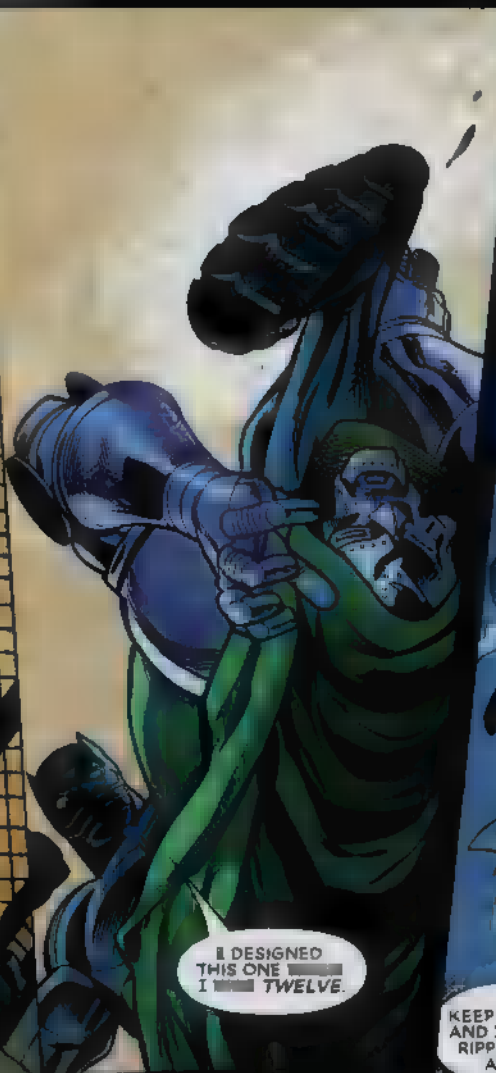


ANY MAN WHO REFUSES A FAVOR FROM DOOM--IS TOO STUPID TO RULE!



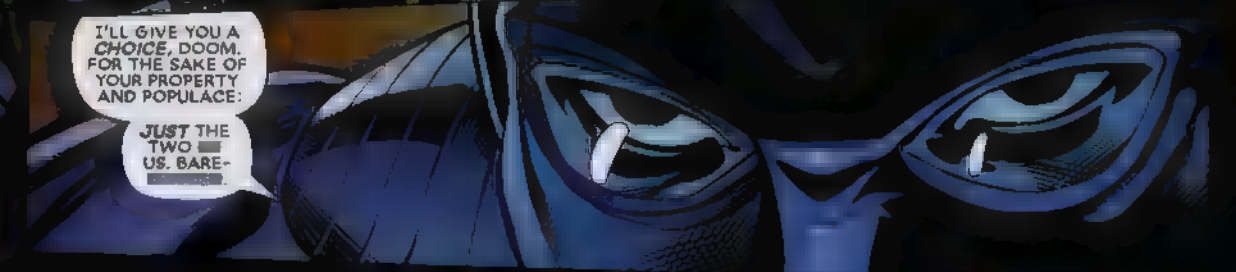


LIGHT ARMOR?
NEAT TRICK. I BUILT
ONE JUST LIKE IT
AT FIFTEEN.



I DESIGNED
THIS ONE [REDACTED]
I [REDACTED] TWELVE.

KEEP COMING.
AND I'LL KEEP
RIPPING YOU
APART!



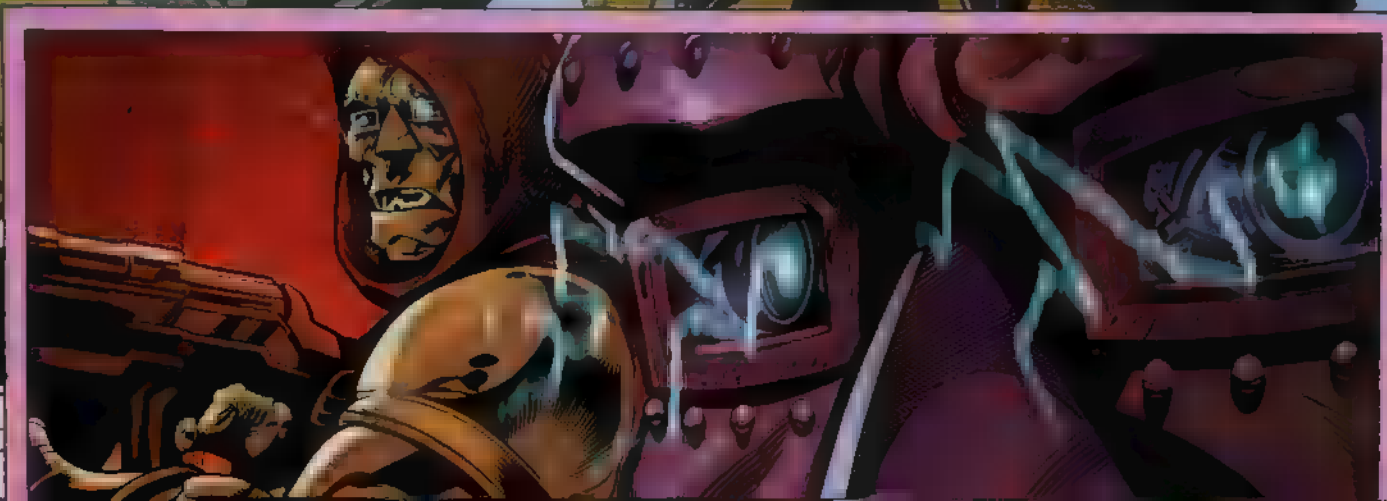
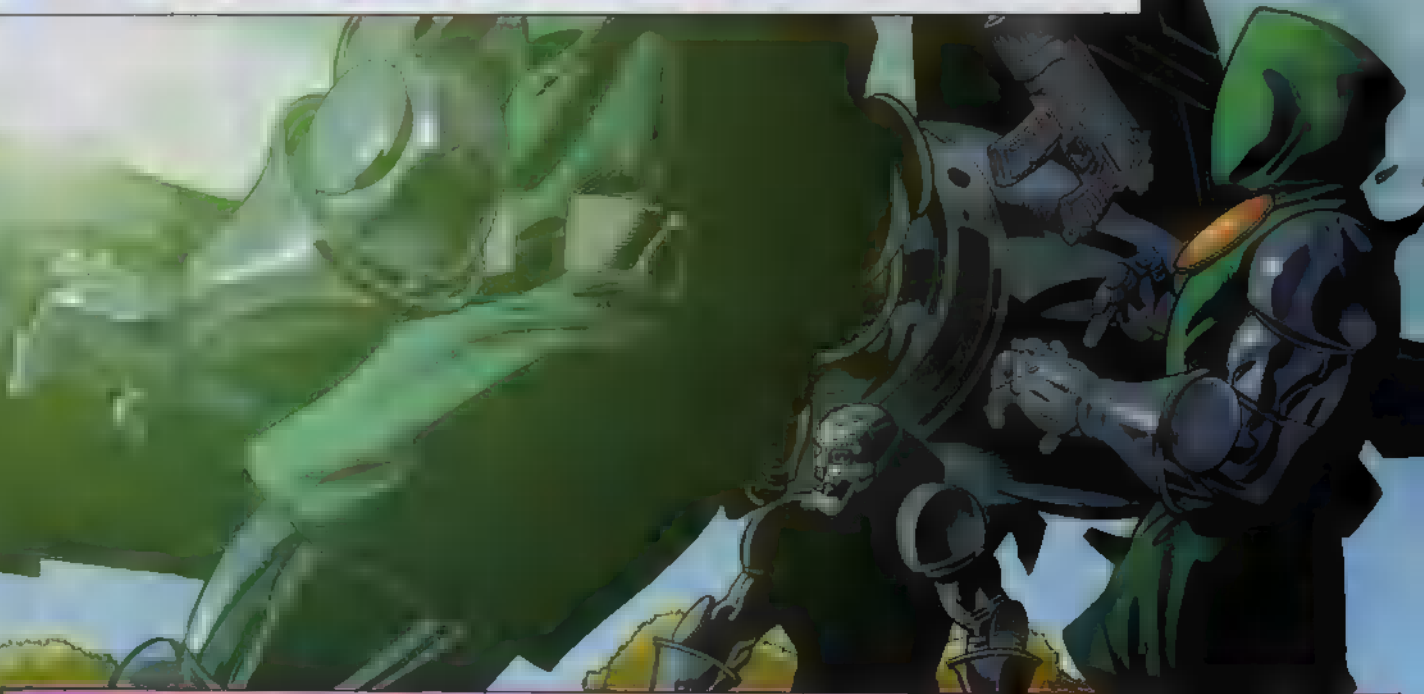
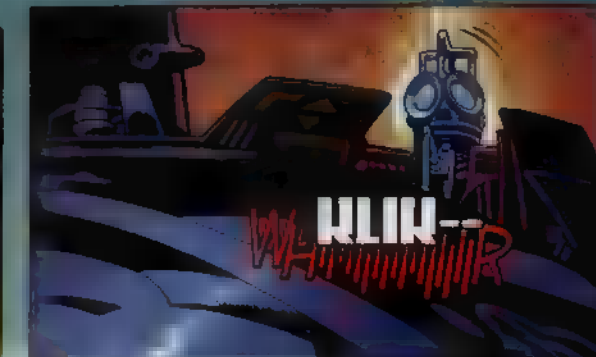
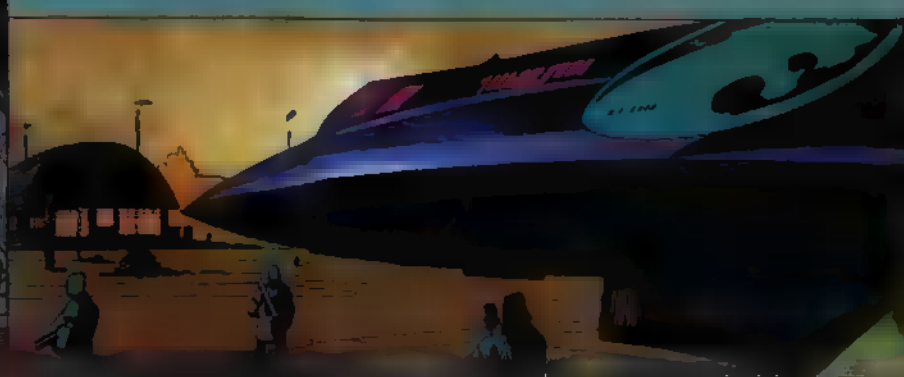
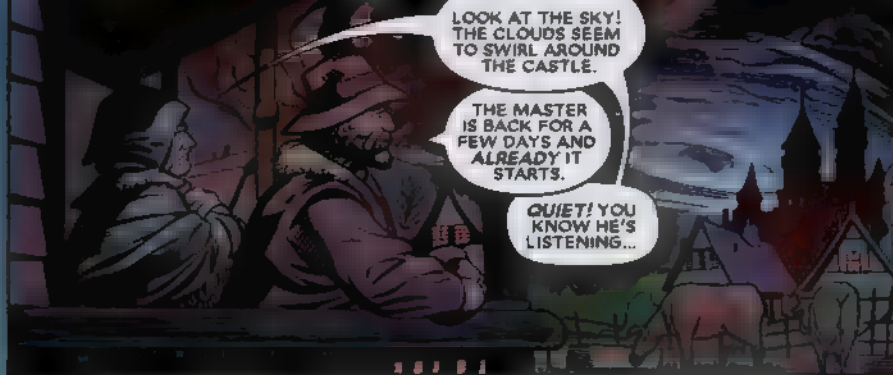
I'LL GIVE YOU A
CHOICE, DOOM.
FOR THE SAKE OF
YOUR PROPERTY
AND POPULACE:

JUST THE
TWO [REDACTED]
US. BARE-



YOU ACT [REDACTED] IF YOU
HAVE LEVERAGE
[REDACTED] SUPERIOR
STRENGTH.

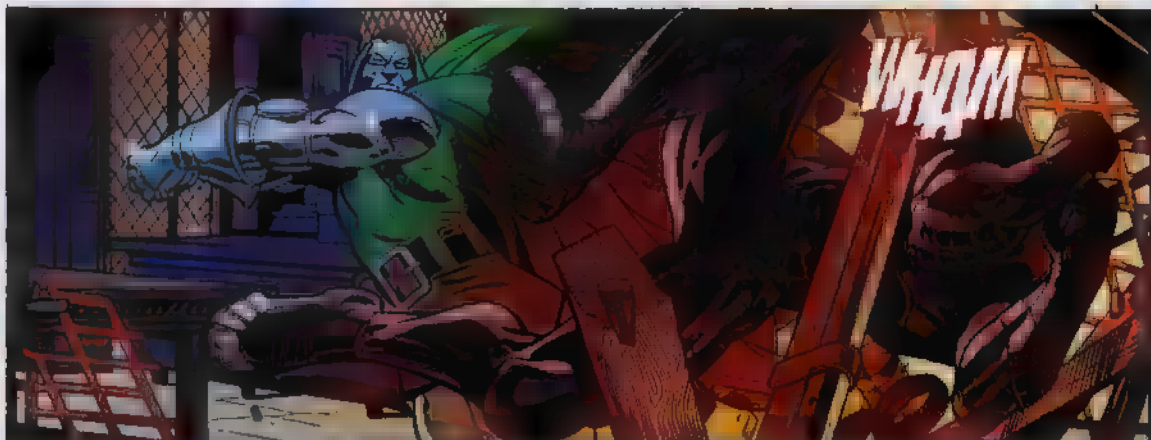
DOOM
[REDACTED] NOT
BLUFF!!!





AMONG OTHER THINGS, YOUR AUTOMATED MILITARY DEFENSE SYSTEM IS DOWN. WHICH [REDACTED] YOU ARE VULNERABLE TO ATTACK-- NOT JUST FROM WAKANDA, BUT ANY [REDACTED] YOUR OTHER ENEMIES.

NOW...DO YOU NEED HELP OUT OF THAT ARMOR?





NEVER TOUCH
MY HUSBAND
AGAIN!

ORORO--
STOP IT!!!

WHAT'S
WRONG,
BELOVED?

THIS IS A
CONFLICT BETWEEN
VON DOOM AND
MYSELF. DO NOT
INTERFERE.

HEH! TROUBLE
IN PARADISE
ALREADY?

LEAVE, T'CHALLA.
I DON'T NEED TO WASTE
ANY MORE TIME WITH
YOU. I ESCAPED FROM
HELL. BUT YOU--

YOU HAVE
WILLINGLY
ENTERED IT!

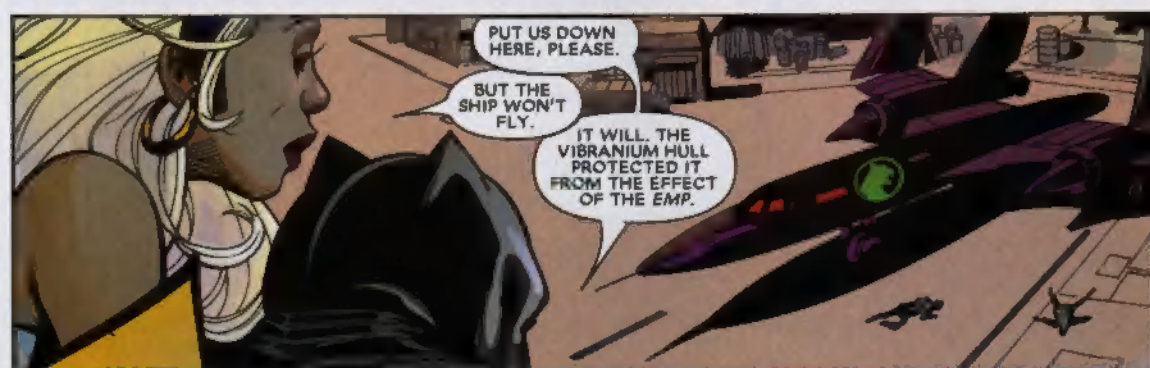
HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA

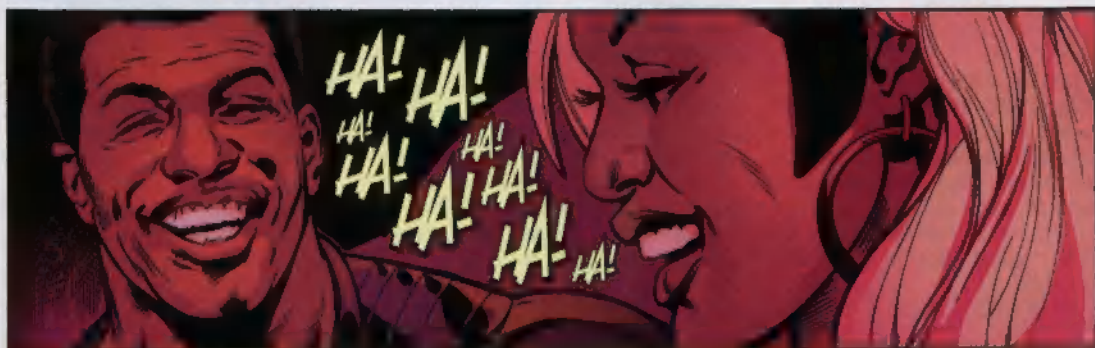
YOU'RE
UPSET.
WE'LL
DISCUSS IT
LATER.

THAT DOOR
WON'T OPEN.
IT'S POWERED
ELECTRONICALLY.

I KNOW
THAT. I BUILT
THE BOMB.
REMEMBER?

I'LL FLY
US OUT.
YOU FLY.
I'LL FIND MY
OWN WAY
OUT.
NOW YOU'RE
JUST BEING
STUBBORN.
I CANNOT
HAVE YOU
QUESTION OR
SECOND-GUESS
ME AT EVERY
TURN.





MAIL TO THE KING!

Greetings, Panther Fans! I must say, reading your letters is always a pleasure. I have plenty that I would like to share with you, so let's go to it!

Dear People of Wakanda,

I am a 27-year-old black male who recently came back to his childhood hobby. As a child I never really followed the Black Panther. This was probably because I felt that he was only added to the Avengers for cultural diversity. He didn't have any powers or abilities and didn't get a lot of exposure. A few months back I heard he was engaged to Storm and decided to pick up the latest copy, issue #14. WOW!!! This is the super hero I have been waiting to find. I am now tracking down all of the back issues I missed. There are other positive black super heroes, plenty of 'em, but T'Challa is at the top. I really love the fact that he is such a strong political figure, and that this comic is up to date on the current events of what's going on in the black community. T'Challa is a positive role model for all kids, especially black kids. If you are also reading the Storm mini series, you get a great history lesson from two great heroes with a solid foundation in some American history. At times I forget that this is fiction, it's that good! I do have one question. The Marvel Universe has an African prince and an African princess. Why did it catch so many people off guard in the comic community when we heard of the proposal? Present company included. Anyway, now you have another faithful follower. It's funny to think, the guy with no powers is one of the most powerful individuals in the world.

Sincerely,
Douglas Smallwood
Eustis, FL

I was also surprised by Ororo's engagement to T'Challa, Douglas. I think that I was surprised because this is a huge change in how I'll be reading characters I've grown up with. But, the more I read, the more I like it...and the more it makes sense. These characters certainly do have a rich history together. And, this issue included, there are numerous possibilities for where they can go next!

Black Panthers:

Hey guys! This book is unique! Each issue is crazier than the previous one. I want to comment on some Black

Panther #17 passages:

The romantic scene between T'Challa and Ororo (T'Ro for paparazzi) was brilliant. I mean, fighting before going to bed? That's gotta be the most exciting and effective foreplay of 'em all!

The "catfight" at the fashion store was hilarious. It was nice to see Ororo in action without her costume but in expensive clothes, giving that Paris Hilton of Africa what she deserved.

And the bachelor party: please send triple kudos to Scot Eaton for that splash page of the club in Rio with all those hot chicks. Unluckily, Panther's trademark bad-@\$\$-ity makes him act like a wet blanket sometimes. I mean, the trip all the way to Brazil for nothing? Not even some innocent dancing? At least, that attitude seems to have saved him from the Cannibal's diabolical plans. He's a big threat, and he's too close—something bad is going to happen soon.

Non-traditional, unexpected scenes and dialogue are becoming Hudlin's signature. His storytelling is all about new angles and original approaches to elements of the super hero world. Cool! I like a writer like that, who takes risks and experiments with his writing to give us fans new emotions and feelings during our monthly reading doses of Black Panther. Don't ever let him go! Make mine Marvel!!!

Abel Lopez Paz
Barcelona, Spain

PS: A big welcome for the new assistant editor. Good luck, man!

I'm glad that you're enjoying the book, Abel. And thank you for the nice welcome! Running around Mighty Marvel, I'm constantly reminded of what the X-Men say to new members: "Hope you survive the experience!"

Dear Mr. Hudlin,

It is the best of times (for fans), it is the worst of times (for characters). In all of comicdom, the events of the past two years have been nothing short of extraordinary. It's been a time of conflicts, intergalactic to personal. It's been a time of death and rebirth, change and confusion, chaos and order.

It's a time of villains uniting and heroes dividing, a time of death and despair all in the name of peace and prosperity. A time when truth becomes lies. A time when no one knows who to trust and betrayal seems to be around every corner. A time

when the politicians and the magicians have ventured to the brink of insanity and beyond. Just as times appear darkest, you bring us this moment of hope, this most joyous of occasions. Just as the death tolls become too high for the sharpest of us to count, you remind us there is still love in this crazy world. You remind all of us that no matter what changes the world has in store for us, as long as we can reach out and find love there is still a chance for peace. In the backdrop of shadows and a world of craziness, two hearts will always be stronger than one. To you I say thank you. Thank you for this wonderful moment, this joining of heroes.

Thank you for bringing these beloved souls together.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in this most grand event. Someone once said, "May you live in interesting times." Thank you for making our times just a bit more interesting. Until times become less than interesting. MAKE MINE MARVEL!!!

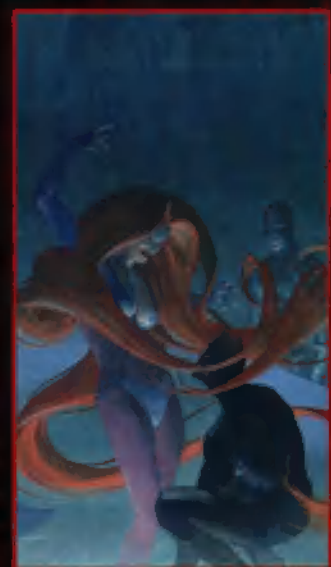
Rick Quick

I couldn't have said it better any other way. Thanks, Rick!

Next month, T'Challa and Ororo continue their diplomatic tour by dropping in on our favorite mute monarch, Black Bolt! We'll see you in thirty...ON THE MOON!

--Daniel

NEXT ISSUE:



INHUMANS!

RICH GINTER
PRODUCTION

DANIEL KETCHUM
ASSISTANT EDITOR

AXEL ALONSO
EDITOR

JOE QUESADA
CHIEF

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